

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-11 (Canceled).

12. (Currently amended) A computer-implemented system for managing the risk or occurrence of surgical site infection incident to a surgical procedure, the computer-implemented system comprising software that:

(a) — ~~identifying~~ identifies a plurality of stages of operative care, including at least a preoperative stage, an intraoperative stage and a postoperative stage;

(b) — ~~identifying~~ identifies one or more points-of-care within each identified stage of operative care;

(c) — for each point-of-care, ~~identifying~~ identifies one or a plurality of health care delivery practices that pose a source of measurable risk of surgical site infection;

(d) — ~~identifying~~ identifies one or more compliance indicators for one or a plurality of health care practices within each point-of-care whereby there is provided the ability to monitor the compliance indicators; and

for each of the compliance indicators, generates a flag when a given health care practice is not in compliance with a rule to thereby align

(e) — ~~aligning~~ the health care delivery practices ~~with the~~ into rule compliance and to provide a perioperative process map of delivery practices spanning the plurality of stages of operative care.

13. (Currently amended) A system for managing the risk or occurrence of surgical site infection incident to a surgical procedure, the system comprising:

(a) a perioperative process map of practices for the delivery of the surgical procedure, the map comprising a plurality of health care delivery practices and one or more indicators of compliance with the one or more health care practices; and

(b) means for monitoring the compliance indicators to achieve a desired level of management of the risk of surgical site infection for the surgical procedure,

wherein the means for monitoring the compliance indicators generates a flag when a given health care practice is not in compliance with a rule.

14. (Original) The system of claim 13 further comprising means for recording the compliance indicators.

15. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the monitoring means comprises a software-encoded information management device.

16. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the monitoring means comprises a software-encoded information management device that is capable of operating across a network of computers.

17 (Original) The system of claim 15 wherein the information management device is delivered to one or more users via the internet.

18 (Original) The system of claim 13 further comprising means for monitoring one or more indicators of outcome.

19. (Original) The system of claim 18 wherein an outcome is the rate of the incidence of surgical site infection.

20 (Original) The system of claim 18 wherein an outcome is the patient satisfaction.

21 (Original) The system of claim 18 wherein an outcome is cost.

22. (New) A computer-implemented method for managing risks of surgical site infection incident to a surgical procedure, the method comprising:

evaluating a practice that poses an infection risk during a stage of the surgical procedure;

storing data indicative of the practice as executed by one or more persons involved with the surgical procedure; and

identifying when the data indicative of the practice is not in compliance with a rule established for the practice.

23. (New) The method of claim 22, wherein identifying when the data indicative of the practice is not in compliance with the rule comprises generating a flag for the data.

24. (New) The method of claim 23, further comprising prompting medical personnel to take further action when the flag is generated.

25. (New) The method of claim 24, further comprising clearing the flag when the further action is taken.

26. (New) The method of claim 22, further comprising generating a perioperative process map of a plurality of practices in a plurality of stages, the plurality of stages including at least a preoperative stage, an intraoperative stage, and a postoperative stage.

27. (New) The method of claim 26, further comprising for each stage of the perioperative process map:

evaluating practices that pose infection risks during the given stage of the surgical procedure;

storing data indicative of each of the practices as executed by one or more persons involved with the surgical procedure; and

identifying when the data indicative of any of the practices is not in compliance with a rule established for the given practice.

28. (New) The method of claim 27, wherein identifying when the data indicative of any of the practices is not in compliance with the rule established for the given practice comprises generating a flag for the data indicative of one of the practices not in compliance with the rule established for that practice.

29 (New) The method of claim 28, further comprising prompting medical personnel to take further action when the flag is generated.

30. (New) The method of claim 29, further comprising clearing the flag when the further action is taken.

31. (New) The method of claim 22, wherein the computer-implemented method is implemented in software.

32. (New) The method of claim 22, wherein the computer-implemented method is implemented in hardware.